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Goals & Girls

I want that shirt!

Brothers in sport

Aurelio & Tony
Vidmar





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from the editor

There is little doubt that the National Soccer League is still in its developing stages. That means that we haven't seen the last of experiments with points, nor have we even arrived at a settled league format.

Certain clubs have, through sheer effort on and off the park over a number of years, almost cemented their place in the NSL structure, including such heavyweights as Marconi, South Melbourne, Adelaide City, Melbourne Knights and Sydney United. Of the others Morwell Falcons and Parramatta Eagles have also shown good heads for business to turn what was previously modest ambitions into fully fledged national league status. Parramatta's record in the Cup, given their short tenure in the top flight, is nothing short of brilliant. But the rest must be counted amongst the 'targets' for any reduction in league numbers.

Almost inevitably there will be calls to reduce the league to ten clubs, to spread the existing players amongst fewer clubs in order to strengthen the overall standard of the NSL. In theory that isn't a bad idea but in practice can it really work?

Firstly, would a player who lives in Wollongong necessarily want to move to Adelaide just to find an NSL club? Remember that at the present time the League is still part time and many of our players have excellent jobs which a few would be loathe to sacrifice for the sake of six or seven months soccer.

Secondly, what about the fans. Assuming that a ten club league meant at least some reduction in our regional representation is it conceivable that fans in these centres would travel hundreds of kilometres to watch weekend games? They certainly don't leave from Canberra in their bus loads, or even car loads, to watch games at Marconi or Edensor Park which are both just a two and a half hour road trip away. And have fans from Newcastle swooped down to Sydney to support Olympic now that the Breakers are in financial mothballs? Do Preston's fans flock to watch the Knights, Souths, Heidelberg or the Zebras?

Why should we sacrifice the talents of a great number of players and the interests of thousands of spectators just to slightly strengthen the richer clubs which in turn would only become richer? And have those clubs given any indication that they would push towards full time football, surely our ultimate target, if the size of the league was reduced?

And would anyone in the game be happy to lose such potentially huge crowd pullers as Heidelberg, Sydney Olympic or even South Melbourne because of lowly league placing? More likely the regional or smaller city teams would be the first ones to feel the sharp turn of the axe. How many teams should we have in Sydney or Melbourne, one, two or even three? Would Sydney Olympic fans watch Marconi, an hour and a quarter's drive through city traffic away, if their side was returned to State League?

But it is undeniable that while soccer needs to expand its horizons to incorporate other centres, particularly Canberra and Perth, it cannot afford to do so at the expense of quality. There is talk from at least one of next seasons new-comers that they will rely on a more or less home grown outfit. If they do, they will fail, they will finish stone-motherless last and their spectator base will drop off to a few hundred. Because the harsh reality is that even the worst NSL team in the country is infinitely better than the best State League team. That would mean that our new teams, assuming the league stays at the same size, would draw from the existing band of semi pros, probably the more average player to whom a move to a new-comer would represent a chance for unfulfilled glory - or at least a regular place in the starting line-up.

And a closing thought; Canberra has been without NSL soccer since 1987. In that time the game has stagnated beyond all belief. Virtually every NSL standard player has left, soccer administration is at an all time low, and the drop-off rate at youth level is reaching alarming proportions. But just ten years before that the capital was one of the brave new horizons of the NSL and in the decade that followed the game boomed at junior level producing such stars as Andrew Bernal, Manis Lamond and, of course, Ned Zelic. While soccer was on the outer along came Rugby League which can now attract crowds of 25,000 regularly to Bruce Stadium, once the home of soccer, to watch the Canberra Raiders. In stark contrast a game between the ACT and visiting Shelbourne, then Irish champions and an entrant in the European Cup, attracted 264 fans to the same ground.

If we are to learn from the bitter lesson of Canberra then soccer must embrace a scheme which will see its horizons expand while at the same time ensuring a top league of the highest possible calibre.

frontcover

It is common place in Europe where soccer shirts are just part of everyday street wear, but in Australia it is only just starting to kick off, partly fuelled by the growth of supporters groups and partly by the huge growth that the round ball game (Football) is currently experiencing.

Our cover features Adelaide City and the Melbourne Knights, likely contenders of the 1994/95 National Soccer league.

For our cover story turn to page 14

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Any club gearing up for a National Soccer League title push would find a full time budget close to the \$1.5 million mark. Bruce Campbell of Soccer Australia draws his conclusions.

Is it the impossible Dream?

Most clubs in the NSL have them, most want more but without the budget to really do anymore than wish.

They are the fulltime footballers of Australia's premier soccer competition, the National Soccer League.

In most cases their numbers are restricted to two categories of player - the visa players who by law are not allowed to take on an outside job and younger players who are intent on cracking the big time of European football, and are gambling on increased fitness and skills practice to take them there.

The classic example was Ned Zelic. The tall and graceful libero struggled by when he was at Sydney United, and then Sydney Olympic, on a wage which would never have seen his bank manager ask him out to dinner.

But at least Zelic, and others like him, were able to top their club salaries with earnings from the Olyroos and Socceroos.

For Zelic, his gamble was more a question of with whom rather than if and in the end that gamble paid off, but it hasn't for countless others, players who are now past their sell-by-date - at least as far as a fulltime European career is concerned.

And with a total of just under three hundred first team footballers currently on contract with NSL clubs there is certainly stiff competition for those rare overseas contracts.

Visa players are another thing. They supposedly offer Australia something more than what is already available.

Sometimes that isn't readily apparent when watching the players in action, but it is their commitment to the game, as much as their skills, which make them such an asset.

"You can see the difference," one NSL coach told me recently. "They know how to train, and how to act properly as footballers."

"The good habits that they can teach the local players are immeasurable."

By law, visa players must be paid a minimum of \$600 per week - win, lose or draw for 52 weeks of the year. Or as long as the player is registered with the club.

For \$600 the NSL is not capable of attracting the Linekers, Van Bastens or Baggios of the world.

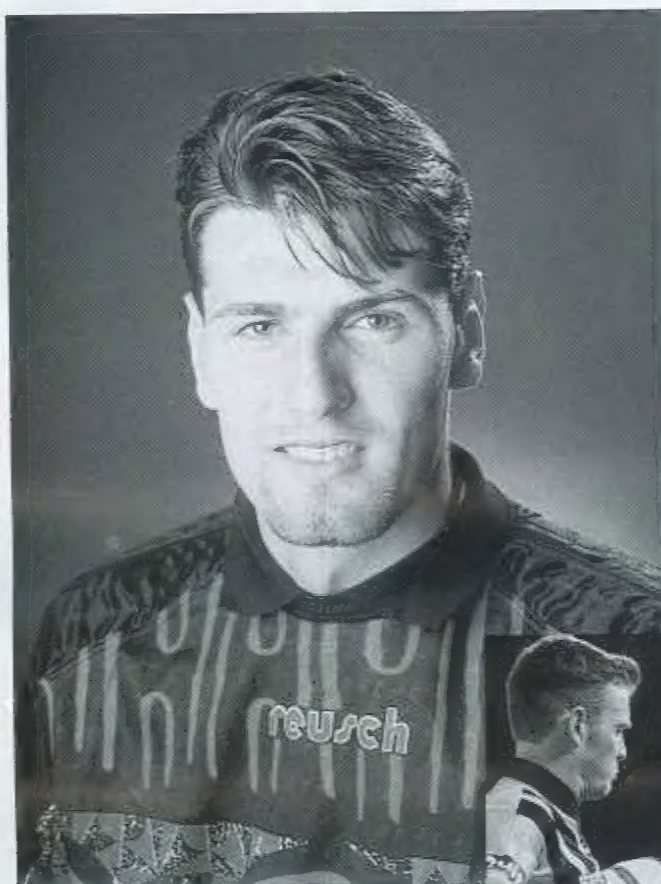
Instead, it draws the good, honest journeymen who are prepared to travel the world in search of full-time football.

Occasionally an ex-international comes out on a visa, but more often than not it is the 'nearly player', those with above average talent who just haven't quite made it big back home.

And rather than struggle in lower division football and juggle a job at the same time, they prefer to accept the \$30,000 contract which at least allows them to have a reasonable lifestyle.

That visa payment is what must

There is little doubt that soccer in Australia is at a crossroads, hampered from any real progression until the ultimate of full-time football is achieved but unable to attract the sort of flair and pizzazz into the game that will make that final jump possible. Just what stands in the way of clubs achieving that 'Impossible Dream'.....



Zeljko Kalac the latest export of the NSL breed.

Mark Viduka the next victim....?



be used as a yardstick when preparing a budget for fulltime football.

It mightn't sound much, but multiply 18-20 times \$30,000 per year and that makes another \$600,000 for the club to find.

Add on the normal running costs which include clerical and managerial staff, ground hire or maintenance, insurance, outfitting, promotion, magazines, NSL fees, transfer fees, signing on fees, bonuses, youth team costs and you have another \$300,000 - and that doesn't include provision for signing on any real big name players.

That is about \$900,000 which an average club must spend just to aim for a possible Top Six spot.

Any club gearing up for a title push would find a fulltime budget closer to the \$1.5million mark.

That is major money.

No sensible business would prepare to spend that sort of cash in the hope that it will come back in through the gate.

Well-run soccer clubs use gate money as a boost for next season, as bonus money or as a top up to their budget - they never use it as the sole revenue.

At \$10 a head through the turnstile, and based on 16 League and Cup games per season, it would require an average gate of 10,000 per game - and

full fare paying customers at that.

There isn't a soccer club in the country, not even Marconi with a good financial background, which is currently drawing enough through the gate to support that dream.

There are signs that crowds are on their way up, with figures this season again being on the improve.

But they are only on the improve for the top clubs.

At the other end of the scale there are clubs still struggling on figures often below 1,000 people.

For professional soccer to succeed it must also be successful at the bottom end.

That leaves the game way short of the marketing wizardry that is necessary to bring in the big bucks.

But is full time professionalism any big deal anyway? Is it really worth it all?

To get a proper answer you'd have to ask Frank Farina, Robbie Slater, Mark Bosnich or any of the 40

or so Aussie professionals who are plying their trade just now from Hong Kong to Argentina - and all ports in between.

Why would Robbie Slater, a player who is rated as near world class by Maradona himself, combine a job with part time football earnings when he is capable of earning up to \$30,000 a month for Blackburn Rovers?

Even players like Shaun Murphy who are reserve teamers in England will be making \$600 - \$800 a week in a full time environment.

And \$600 goes a lot further in Nottingham than it would in Melbourne.

So, how far away is Australia from becoming fully professional when even the very average Belgian League can lure away our best players.

With the right marketing push, it is conceivable that that 10,000 crowd would be easy-meat for clubs like Marconi, Adelaide City and Melbourne Knights.

Imagine what our own league would be like if every one of those players had stayed at home - training and playing in a fulltime environment.

It is conceivable that the big clubs of the League would attract crowds around the 18,000 mark with the rest following on behind.

But soccer in Australia must take a united approach to achieve that dream.

The ASF must be used as the fulcrum for attaining professionalism, not by reducing the amount of clubs within the League or engaging in silly TV programmes which allow peripheral newsprint journalists to snipe at those who have invested their time, energy and money into the game.

Nor by allowing the direction of the game to be led by faceless people who have no real love nor interest in the game itself.

It is now approaching the twenty year mark since the clubs first agreed upon a national format.

It is maybe now time for the clubs themselves to agree upon the next stage, a time frame for the adoption of full time soccer.

When that is decided - by all clubs - then those with the skills, both on and off the park, will be attracted to our domestic league.

That is when Australian soccer will rise to the aspirations that the many hard working servants of the game have. ●

Against Argentina the Vidmar brothers wrote their names into the history books, and into the hearts of soccer fans everywhere when their 'assist and score double' hit the back of the net against the two-times World Champions.

Time has moved on since that great night at the Sydney Football Stadium when just for a brief moment it looked as if we could do the impossible and beat Argentina. Never before have two brothers ever played for Australia and the Vidmar brothers are still writing their own stylish chapter in the record books.

"I keep my hair long so that you can recognise me when I'm with Tony", laughs Aurelio – and the media responds by changing Tony's initial to T rather than A, just to avoid confusion. But if off the park

The Vidmar Brothers

the two look and talk the same then on the park there is no similarity at all. Aurelio is a stylish ball player who attacks from out wide, and always looks better going forward than he is in tackle. Brother Tony, on the other hand, has grabbed his chance to fill national coach Eddie Thomson's problem full back spot with relish. So much so that he looks as permanent a fixture as his more celebrated brother.

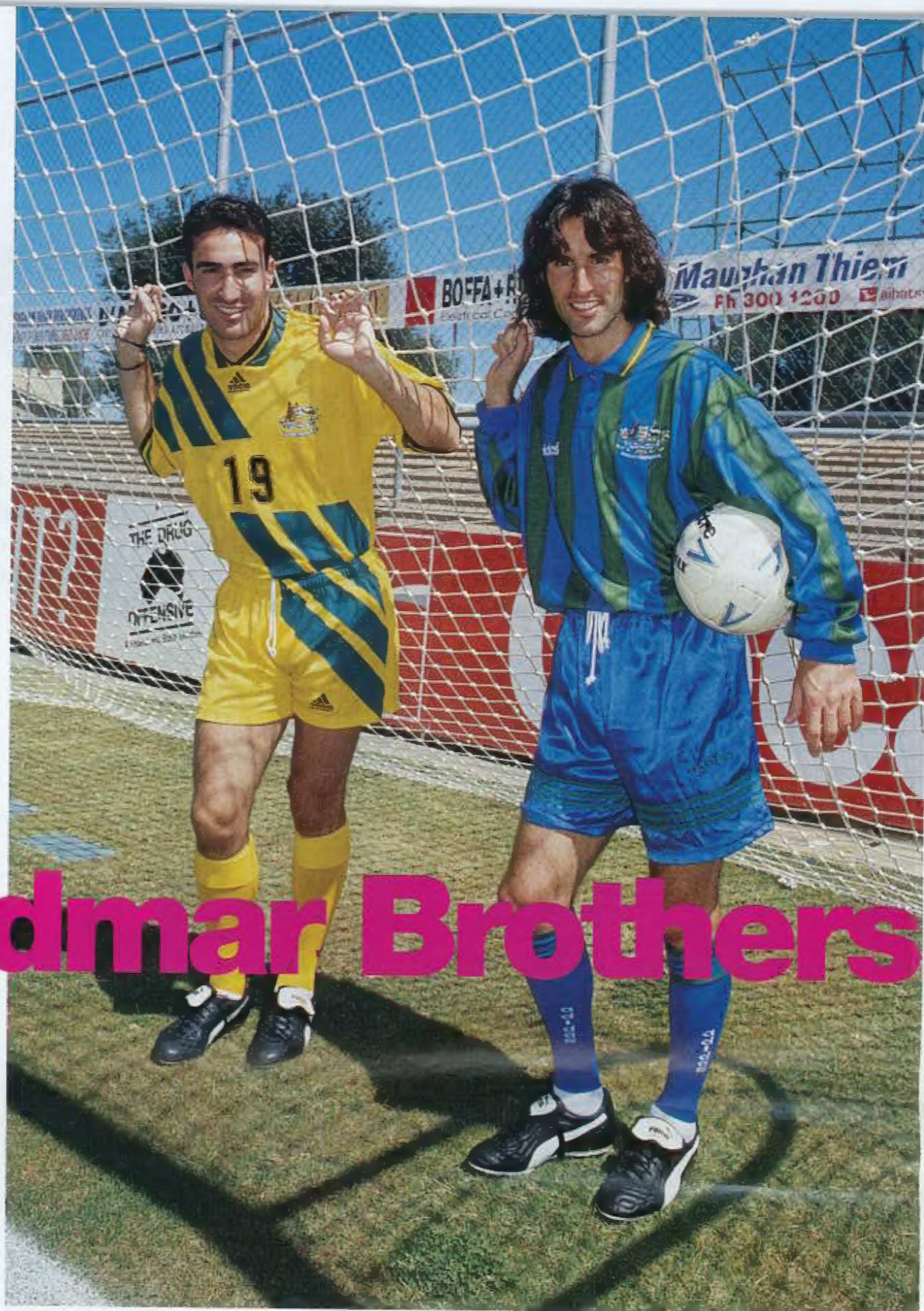
Both had careers in Belgium and while Tony decided that Germinal Ekeren wasn't for him Aurelio moved to a bigger club with Standard Liege where he has had probably his best season ever.

Adelaide City coach Zoran Matic scoffs at that suggestion, claiming he has never played better than when he was in the black and white stripes of the Adelaide City Zebras.

But whatever the claims, they are the most famous soccer bothers in Australia – and Eddie Thomson hopes that the situation remains for a long time to come, as we found out when Soccer Australia caught up with the Vidmars during Aurelio's break from the rigours of the European winter football. ●



Photography by Joe Jankó



Aurelio & Tony Vidmar profile >

The Vidmar brothers epitomise the new age of Australian soccer – glamorous, talented, sought after by European clubs, and relishing the chance to represent their country.

Born in Adelaide of Italian parents, they have an older brother Andrew, 30, and sister Sylvana, 29. They developed their professional soccer skills with NSL Club Adelaide City, where Tony is still a prominent force in the team. Aurelio has had a successful career in Belgium, is currently playing for Standard Liege, and this season is one of the top goal-scorers in the Belgium League.

Tony had a short stint in Belgium but prefers to be based in Australia – a sentiment which is no doubt very much appreciated by his Adelaide City coach, Zoran Matic and his fans.

Both brothers are dynamic and skilful on the pitch. Who will ever forget the way they combined to score that magnificent goal against Argentina in the World Cup Qualifier.

Full Name: Aurelio Vidmar
Date of Birth: 3 February 1967
Place of birth: Adelaide.
School Attended: Underdale High
First Soccer Club: Woodville S.C. (Age 10)
Previous Soccer Clubs: Adelaide City, K.V. Kortrijk, S.V. Waregem and Standard Liege.
Current Position: Forward
Favourite Position: Midfield
Favourite Ground: Nou Camp, Barcelona
Career Highlights: Qualifying games in World Cup
Career Disappointments: Not qualifying for the World Cup and not proceeding past first round for European Cups last season.
Most Memorable Game: Both World Cup Qualifiers against Argentina, and 1986 Final Five Series.
Biggest Influences on Career: Zoran Matic, Coach at Adelaide City, Mario Corti, family and friends.
Most Admired Soccer Player: Zico – of Brazil
Most Admired Sportsperson Outside Soccer: Gary Ablett
Favourite past times outside soccer: Sleeping in, cool nights and days with friends, night-clubbing
Favourite Food: Seafood and Italian
Favourite Drink: Scotch and dry, all juices

Ideal Woman: Sensitive, able to communicate, outgoing personality
Favourite Movie: Scarface
Favourite Actors: Al Pacino, Andy Garcia
Favourite Actress: Michelle Pfeiffer, Annabella Sciorra
Favourite Music: Rock, Rap, Soul
Favourite Soccer Boots: Puma
Favourite Holiday Spots: South of France
Routine Before Game: Sleep in, be around people
Favourite Nightspots: Everywhere's cool – as long as I'm with friends
Languages Spoken: English, Italian, French and Flemish
What do you miss most about home when you're away? Family, Friends, that we live in the best country in the world
What do you like wearing when you're not wearing soccer strips? Designer jeans and cool shirts
What's your idea of a romantic night out? Dinner at elegant restaurant and lots of cuddles afterwards
Do you smoke? No way!
Do you drink? Socially
Favourite TV Program: Cheers
What type of car do you drive: Opel Calibra
What is your soccer ambition? To be the Captain of the Socceroos >

► Full Name: Tony Vidmar
Date of Birth: 4 July 1970
Place of birth: Adelaide
School Attended: Underdale High School
First Soccer Club: Woodville Junior Soccer Club
Previous Soccer Clubs: Adelaide City, Belgium Ekeren and Adelaide City
Current Position: Left full back
Favourite Position: Left full back
Favourite Ground: Nou Camp, Barcelona
Career Highlights: Playing against Argentina in Buenos Aires. Playing in Barcelona – 1992 Olympics
Career Disappointments: Not qualifying for the World Cup. Scoring against Denmark in Barcelona.
Biggest Influences on Career: My parents, my brother Aurelio and Zoran Matic
Most Admired Soccer Player: Paolo Maldini
Most Admired Sportsperson Outside Soccer: Michael Jordan
Favourite past times outside soccer: Love being with friends, going to the beach, and night-clubbing
Favourite Food: Pasta – any kind
Favourite Drink: Mineral water
Ideal Woman: Good sense of humour, natural, loves to party
Favourite Movie: Godfather 1 and 2
Favourite Actors: Robert De Niro, Al Pacino
Favourite Actress: Judy Davis
Favourite Music: All kinds
Favourite Soccer Boots: Puma
Favourite Holiday Spots: Greek Islands
Routine Before Game: Sleep in till about 9 or 9.30, have a cup of Italian espresso, read the paper, have a plate of pasta prepared by mum, drive down to the beach and walk for about an hour, go home, have a few hours sleep, shower, get bag ready and then have a couple of espressos and a couple of bananas and then I'm off!
Favourite Nightspots: Anywhere – as long as I'm enjoying myself
Languages Spoken: English, Italian
What do you miss most about home when you're away? Being with friends
What do you like wearing when you're not wearing soccer strips? Casual Puma street clothes and my 501s
What's your idea of a romantic night out? Candle-lit dinner
Do you smoke? No – I hate it
Do you drink? Yes – socially
Favourite TV Program: The Simpsons
What is your soccer ambition? To be at the highest level possible, in Australia at best of my ability. To keep representing Australia
What type of car do you drive: Nissan Pulsar. ●



topguns

Last season the Sydney United stalwart lived in the shadow of Australia's World Cup players, but now he is emerging as

Tony Popovic

a super talent in his own right and determined to stake his claim, either at home or abroad.

The secret is out, Sydney United have a player with immense talent on their books - the only thing is that the general media hasn't cottoned on yet. In Tony Popovic, United have one of the best defenders seen in the NSL for some time. Week in and week out Popovic turns in impeccable performances but, to date, his real value has gone largely unnoticed - except at his club where he is recognised as one of the best players in Australia.

And when Popovic missed a club league match in December due to suspension his leadership qualities were also badly missed - almost as much as his exceptional tackling, reading of the game and distribution.

If the media haven't yet been told then both national coach Eddie Thomson and club coach Branko Culina realise just what a gem they have. Thomson positively raves over the

big fellow. "We took him to Asia with us and really he didn't put a foot wrong. Tony Popovic is such a committed player that he is going to go far in this game, he has a BIG future with Australia. I would have no hesitation at all in naming him in any line-up."

That kind of praise doesn't surprise first-season United coach Branko Culina either. The former Knights and Victorian State coach sees Popovic as an almost indispensable part of his arsenal and is resigned to the fact that his team suffers when their skipper isn't in the line-up. "He gives me 100% all the time," Culina says. "Popa is really an inspirational player who can lift his team when other players are slacking off."

Popovic is just one example of the production line of outstanding talent at Sydney United, a club which has produced more junior players for Australia in the last five years than any other club in the country. Mention his name in front of United President Ivan Simic and you'll feel a glow, for Simic just oozes praise for his club captain. "He's really a very nice boy as well," points out the United boss who is maybe resigned to losing his club's star asset. "Tony Popovic is the perfect captain for this club and he takes great pride in his work."

Popovic, along with co-star Zeljko Kalac, also works full time for United as a Youth Development Officer and the two have become extremely popular in West Sydney with their continual school visits and coaching clinics. It is maybe this new face of Sydney United, as much as their on-field talent, which has set the club apart as league innovators.

But part of the club's business awareness might eventually see the popular defender heading overseas. With a new grandstand just completed, 2,000 seats installed and major club refurbishments the club realises the need to keep ahead of the financial game. "It isn't just a sport anymore," says Ivan Simic. "Soccer is a business too, and it is fast becoming big business. In the past the club has maybe taken the view that most of the money should be spent of bringing in new players.

However, we feel that our future is just as important as our past and we intend to make Edensor Park the finest ground in Australia. To do that we must realise some of our assets, which means selling off some of our talented youngsters."

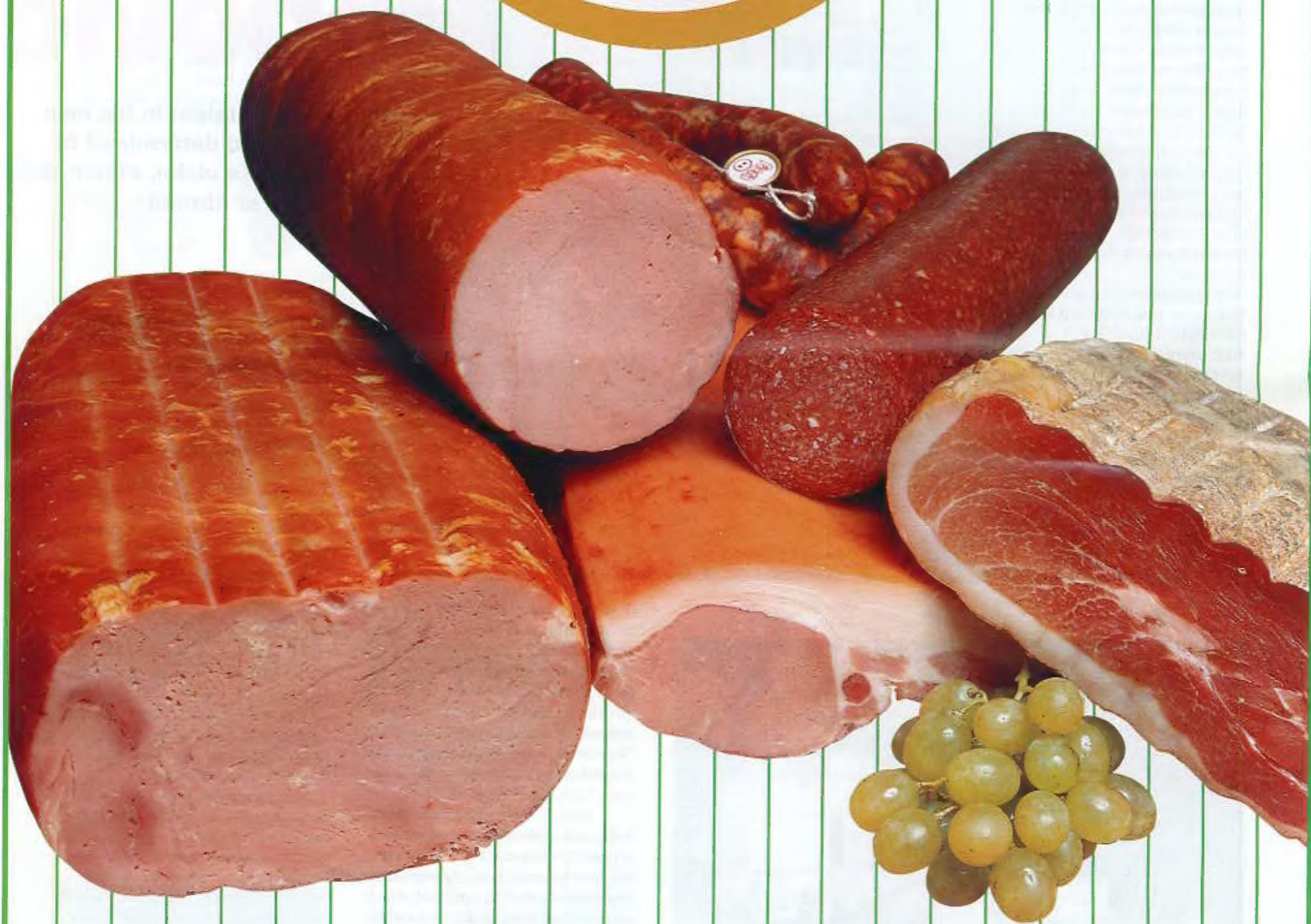
In the past United has blundered badly in the transfer stakes, most notably the disasters of losing Mark Bosnich and Ned Zelic for literally peanuts. That won't happen while Simic is at the helm and already the club is planning a major overseas tour at the end of the season to showcase its players. "Look, we have the best young players in the country," he points out, "and waiting in the wings we have the likes of Bilokapic, Rudan, Plesa and Vrkic - all junior internationals."

For stars like Tony Popovic that means that this is his last season in the red and white of United although in the meantime the only problem he presents Branko Culina is where he should be played on the field. "I could play him in the midfield and he would add a lot to the attack," says Culina. "But I need his aggression at the back also. What I really need is two Tony Popovics - that would be ideal."

And the player himself? "I just take it as it comes," says the current Coca-Cola Socceroo. "I love playing for this club and it is a great honour to be captain."

But now that the secret is out, make your way to Edensor Park. There is a good chance that Tony Popovic could follow other United favourites like Slater, Krncevic, Bosnich and Zelic to the rich playing fields of Europe, sooner rather than later. ●





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Keep On Coming

More good news, with the release of figures indicating a healthy increase in crowd attendances at NSL matches. There is no doubt that there is a greater interest in Australian league football and it is the result of some very hard behind-the-scenes work at club level. And with the staging of events like the Olympic Four Nation tournament (played as Soccer Australia was at press) plus next month's tour by Colombia and the internationals and club visits planned for the winter, we are in for one heck of a year.

If each club could set itself a target of increasing its crowds by 10% next season then we would see even more tangible results. More revenue, increase in facilities, better player interest - it's the kind of snowball which we need to keep rolling. I have spoken to a number of coaches and club officials throughout this season on the subject of full time soccer and most clubs set an average crowd of about 6,000 as their survival target for professionalism. There is no doubt that once one club takes the plunge then the others will be forced to follow, caught up in tidal wave like that which engulfed Australian soccer in 1977 when the NSL was kicked off.

In the meantime the clubs must keep on working hard to bring the missing crowds back to the game - but its good to know that much of that effort is being rewarded at the turnstiles this season.

Magic Johnny

It isn't the done thing for one member of the press to back-slap another but, what the heck.

I have always said it, often printed it said by others, but feel that it should be publicly acknowledged too.

Johnny Warren is one of the most knowledgeable journalists in Australian soccer. His depth of knowledge extends

far beyond the results page on a Monday morning and his quest for something deeper in this game knows no bounds.

He is given far more credibility outside this country, as is often the case, than he is at home. Like many, he has suffered the slings and arrows of football politics.

What made me cringe, however, was a remark by a senior administrator that Warren wasn't much of a player and that the Socceroos of his era wouldn't match the current team. Garbage!

As a schoolboy I listened to Martin Royal's broadcasts from Asia when Warren was a household name as a player; later as a youth I watched him every week in the colours of the mighty St George; then, I also had the opportunity to marvel at his ball skills when Australia played the likes of Iran and Israel, for so long our nemesis in international soccer.

But it has also been conveniently forgotten that Warren was one of the early players to play professional football in England and who would argue that the English game of the 60s wasn't technically superior to the rush and thrust of the 90s?

Warren will be embarrassed by this, because he is so unassuming and modest. But just because he is one of the game's gentlemen doesn't mean that we have to forget our former heroes, as Australians so often do. The tragedy was that serious knee injury hampered much of Johnny Warren's later career and by the time of the World Cup finals in 1974 he was just a shadow. But he was there - a memory I'm sure that he will never forget.

For me, the grace that he brought to St George as one of the most stylish midfielders of all time will never be forgotten, a team which boasted the likes of Ottie Abonyi and Adrian Alston - and tubby little Mike Denton who could fall down in the box and somehow the ball would still bounce off his head into the

goal!

Magic Johnny Warren - a great player but an even greater soccer statesman.

Shape Of Things To Come

Just when we all thought that Rugby League was ready to eclipse soccer with its expanded league came the news that two media moguls were scrapping like ravaged dogs for the bones of a proposed 'Super League'. It seems that all isn't well in the pointy-ball code.

And then hard on that came the announcement of a professional surge in Rugby Union, with its marketing agents fanfaring its appeal as an international game (I'm still trying to work out who the 117 countries are that supposedly play the game (unless Scotland count as 85 because they invented Union).

So, now national league soccer looks set to expand into Perth and move back to Canberra, if that city can sort its own problems. If the league does increase to 15 or 16, rather than cut the less successful clubs, then each NSL club would play a minimum of 28 NSL matches. Add on a possible 3 Top Six

games, another 2-5 Johnnie Walker Cup matches, State Cup fixtures, friendlies against touring clubs and the almost inevitable Super Cup games planned by ASF Chairman John Constantine and our club players are faced with some 45 - 50 club games a season.

That is looking good to me, and we are only crystal ball gazing as far ahead as next season. Should the Coca-Cola Socceroos make it to France '98 then the money poured into the ASF's coffers would make our World Youth Cup windfall look like toy money.

I would think that the boys at Rugby headquarters know that time is against them, for, as every

one knows, a round ball rolls straight - in this case, straight to the top.

Peter Andre T-Shirt give away

The management of Soccer Australia would like to thank all you readers for the terrific response we've received in offering the autographed Peter Andre T-Shirts. We are sorry that no more are available however we will endeavour to get another opportunity for a promotion with Peter Andre in the course of the NSL Soccer Season. Thankyou once again for your overwhelming response. ●



teamprofile → adelaide city

Before the formation of the National Soccer League in 1977 Adelaide City proved to be almost unbeatable in their local State competition - winning the league no less than 12 times in an era of almost total domination from 1953 onwards.

And if anyone thought the Crow Eaters would not be up to national standard then they have since been proven wrong, VERY wrong. Last season the Zebras added another National Championship to their haul when Damian Mori fired in maybe the best Grand Final goal of all time against a stage frightened Melbourne Knights. That, plus their wins in 1992 and 1986, made it a hat-trick of big wins to go along with the three National Cup victories.

But the success story of the Zebras isn't just at League level for they



have also been a major supplier of talent to the Coca-Cola Socceroos, donating almost their entire defence to the current national cause. Last season that looked to have backfired on Adelaide City when, after the return of their national team players, they struggled to put it together in early-season league matches. However, coach Zoran Matic got it right when it mattered most and a power house run in the latter part of the season set them up for their Grand Final triumph in Melbourne.

Today, Adelaide City are rightly regarded as one of the Big Tree of Australian soccer and although their trophy cabinet is overflowing the club from Hindmarsh Stadium seem set to reap the rewards of success for a long time to come. ●



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ACH

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It's a long way from the shores of Lake Burley Griffin to Rio's Copacabana Beach

From Canberra to the Copacabana

At the end of this month Australia's indoor internationals, the Indoorroos, jet out of the country on an Aerolineas Argentinas aircraft headed for the beaches of Rio where they will take part in a special 'mini World Cup.'

"It's a sign of the respect that the Brazilians have for us that Australia is invited," says Indoorroo coach Jim Roberts from his Canberra base. "Since the last World Cup in Hong Kong we have steadily built ties between the two

countries. They have toured here and we have also gone to Brazil. But this competition is set to be very exciting for us."

In fact, Australia has even imported some of the Brazilian magic in the shape of Delamore, its International Technical Advisor. "Delamore has helped us jump along the international track at least ten years," says Roberts. "Before coming to Australia he was Assistant Coach of Brazil, the undisputed kings of Futsal (FIFA indoor soccer). He has helped me to implement new playing patterns which are seeing Australian Futsal developing at a rapid rate. Since Hong Kong I have gradually rebuilt the team and we are confident of doing well in Brazil."

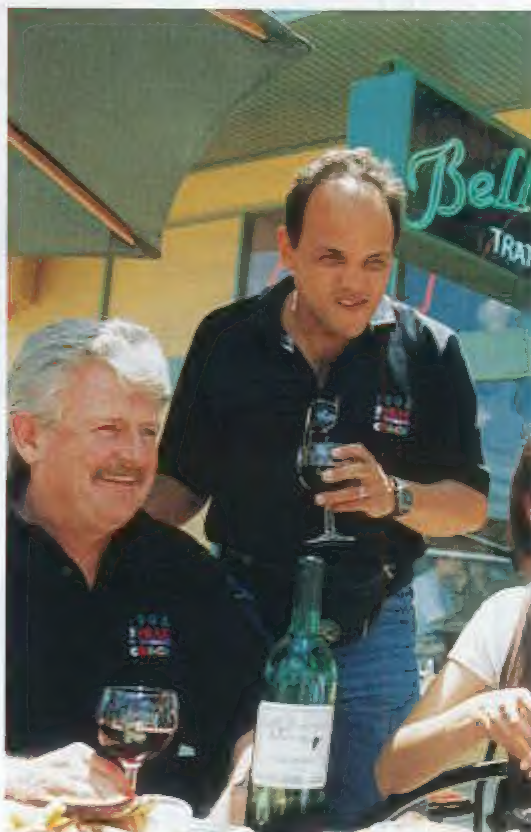
Australia will take part in the tournament on the famous Rio beach, the Copacabana, where a special playing surface will be mounted on the sand. And for the last six months Roberts has held weekly training camps in both Canberra and Sydney to ensure that his players are at peak performance level.

"Whenever possible we bring the players into camp at the Australian Institute of Sport in Canberra," adds Roberts, "but that is only a supplement to our normal weekly sessions. The players have worked really hard and this is undoubtedly the finest squad that we have ever assembled. It's a tall order to win an event like that, played on Brazilian home soil and against players



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National Coach Jim Roberts displays some technique.



Elliott Zwangobani is one of the rising stars in the aussie line-up.

who are virtually professionals. After all, we are really amateur players and although the commitment level of the Indoorroos cannot be questioned you just can't compare full time training and playing at the very highest professional standard.

"Before Australia really advances as an international force we need to establish a professional indoor league but in the meantime we can still make our mark by doing well next month. It's a long way from Canberra to the Copacabana but we aren't going there just to have a beach party, we're going there to represent Australia. Maybe we don't get the media recognition yet but that could all change with a good performance in the mini World Cup."

That might be the immediate aim for the Indoorroos but with the sport set to be established as an Olympic event the Brazilian samba is just the start for the softly spoken Jim Roberts and his Indoorroos.

(Below) The indoorroos even have lunch in style - at Canberra's trendy Belluci's Trattoria.



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Unfair Shoot-Outs

My name is Marcella DeAngelis and I am 14 years-old and a student at St Monicas College. I enjoy reading your magazine very much and I am a great fan of soccer, especially Juventus, locally and internationally.

I am writing this letter to discuss the unfairness of penalty shoot-outs.

In my opinion penalties, are very unfair to both teams. Four or five players are left to take the shots in order to decide on a winning team.

I don't think that a game should be judged like this and instead of taking penalties the game should be played in extra time until a player scores a goal.

Although the crowd enjoy watching this action I still think that it is wrong. My recommendation for the 1998 World Cup in France is to do what I have just suggested.

Also, if possible, I would like to see a picture of the Melbourne Zebras in your next issue of Soccer Australia.

Marcella DeAngelis
Thomastown
Victoria

(Aren't you just being pcky? isn't substituting shoot-outs with overtime sudden death much of the same lottery? Personally, I like them both and believe that if two coaches can't sort their players out sufficiently in the allotted ninety minutes - and the seemingly interminable injury time - then they can't complain. But you have hit the nail on the head - the fans do like the shoot-out. The introduction of the innovation wasn't so much to settle games but to bring the crowds back through the turnstiles. I just hope that the ASF don't bow to pressure from the coaches - this is the best decision they have made since 1977. - Ed)



Bagging The Game

I am getting fed up with watching SBS and listening to journalists bagging the game. It seems that everyone is an expert and that the people in charge are all stupid. How many of the press have ever been involved in playing or administration at a high level? They aren't expected to administer the game, just write about it.

I get fed up buying the two major Sydney dailies only to find out that there is little or no soccer content - except for the obligatory British round-up.

My recommendation - if they

can't say anything good, either in print or on television, then they should shut up. Or maybe we should write to the people who employ them and tell them to get decent writers.

By the way, my favourite is Johnny Warren whose comments are sometimes of an attacking nature but always constructive and balanced - and he could play, I know.

SBS is a great soccer station, but I feel that they are being used by these so-called experts who in reality are just trying to make themselves appear to be something which they aren't - knowledgeable in soccer.

"Ex St George Player"

(name and address withheld by request)

P.S. Bring back Uncle Stavros, he was great.

NSL All Stars

I would like to see national coach Eddie Thomson fielding at least one game a year billed as the NSL All Stars.

I know that he wants to see his future internationalist play but aren't we doing the code a dis-service by giving away so many caps? Remember Rudi Gutendorf, you name him, he capped him - to the point where a Gutendorf cap isn't worth a tosser.

If the overseas players aren't available then play the NSL All Stars. It wouldn't mean devaluing our cap system, risk bad results against inferior sides and it would also give a chance for other players to take part in high prestige internationals.

I would like to see a team such as the following play;

Kalac (Sydney United)

Popovic (United)

Smith (Marconi) Babic (United) Jolevski (Melbourne)

Banini (Melbourne) Andriolo (West Adelaide) Colombo (Marconi) Polak (South Melbourne)

Ndongo-Keller (Adelaide) Viduka (Knights)

Comments, please.

D Wright

Edensor Park

(Great deal! I'm sure Eddie Thomson would see the merit too, remember he was 'capped' for the Scottish League, the equivalent of your suggestion. Think of all the great overseas players over the years who could have played in an NSL A. Stars line up - Keegan, Charlton, Ardiles, Brazil, Best and even our own Craig Johnston who was never capped by Australia. - Ed) ●

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By Steve Darby

The first coaching session I ever took in Australia was back in 1980 in Tasmania, for Devonport Soccer Club who bought me from Bahrain as a Player/Coach. To this day I remember all these little players wearing strange woollen shirts, with no sleeves. These shirts representing the Carlton, Collingwood or Hawthorn Football clubs. At the time in Tasmania there was nothing that could be done to rectify this crazy situation, as there was no viable alternative. This being further entrenched as in 1980 Tasmania could not receive SBS, so even Phillips League games (as the League was called in 1980) could not be seen. The Tasmanian players could really only identify with players such as Peter Daicos of Collingwood to be a hero or role model.

The next year I was Director of Coaching for Tasmania and in an article for the Hobart Mercury I wrote (perhaps naively) that as one of my aims of the job it was my intention to get young players to come training in Soccer shirts. I was happy to accept foreign shirts as that would be a step towards the ultimate goal of wearing Australian soccer shirts.

To be quite blunt ... I failed!

However 15 years later not only are all young players coming to training in Soccer shirts, but they are watching National League games in them and to extend it further it has become a fashion phenomenon and it's even the done thing to be seen in a night club wearing a Soccer shirt. The more

vivid and unusual the better.

So the days of young Soccer people wearing Rugby League and Australian Rules shirts either at training or watching the games are gone, and this is great news for Australian soccer. How did it happen? Well the uncontrollable world of fashion took over, and in the hot bed of Soccer in Europe, fans, both boys and more and more girls are starting to wear Soccer shirts as a fashion item. The manufacturers of Soccer shirts, then obviously saw a potential market and designed shirts that people would want to be seen in. Certainly Adidas, Umbro and Lotto have set the way with their designs. Steve Pappas of "Soccer City" in Sydney has said the sale of Soccer shirts in Australia has really boomed. In particular AC Milan, Ajax and Manchester United. However, in general the Italian Serie A shirts are selling as fast as he can bring them in and there is also a trend towards long sleeved shirts. The forward thinking clubs capitalised on this trend and made sure that they changed their strip every year and even had an attractive away strip.

The sales of Soccer shirts in Australia are proving this new trend and personal observation at games confirms it. An interview with a 15 year old girl who is a Soccer fanatic, reveals the reason behind why she wears Soccer shirts. Rebecca said "I'm a Sydney Olympic fan and I wear my Sydney Olympic shirt at all the games. I first started because I thought Ivan Kelic



Goals

hatShirt!

was hot ... its terrible that he was sold. When I go to the Soccerroo games I wear my Soccerroo away shirt, as I like the colour and the style. I think the colour is a real factor in the decision if me or one of my friends wants to buy a shirt."

So it really is up to our national league clubs to build on this trend and capitalise on the fashion market to both satisfy the public need and to earn marketing revenue. The great news is that our clubs are starting to do this. Sydney United have a trendy Puma shirt both home in their traditional colours and away in the Manchester United style of all black. Also Marconi have a very popular Adidas Sky Blue strip. Other clubs such as Adelaide City, Melbourne Knights, Morwell and Brisbane have reported that their sales of Soccer shirts and supporter items are on the increase.

The A.S.F is fully behind this trend and if you watched the Madonna in Sydney video you will see the handiwork of A.S.F. media man Scott Crebbin, who managed somehow to get Madonna to wear a Soccerroo shirt. He reckons he would have kept it for life, but Madonna wanted to keep it. Also it was great to see Peter Andre proudly wearing his Soccer shirt when he launched the 1994/5 season "Let's get it on", which also featured on the front cover and centre-

spread of Soccer Australia's' December issue. Television is catching on in this area and Alex Dimitriates always wore his Sydney Olympic shirt on Heartbreak High and Lex Marinos wore his on Live and Sweaty.

Kaye Yardin is in a unique situation to comment on this current trend, she is a full time development officer and at 22 is tangible to the fashion market. Kaye said "I believe Soccer gear has created a sensation, especially amongst teenagers. Mainly because the colours and designs available now are bright and bold. It is also a bonus to have a wardrobe which serves two purposes. I can choose to train in my Soccer gear ... especially if we are on the next pitch to the Marconi men's team or wear it out casually."

Following on this concept, the female Soccerroos are about to launch a brand new playing strip for the 1995 World Cup. Their sponsor Martin Reusch said "I want the clothes to obviously be functional, but I want the players to both look and feel good when they wear their shirts, and I hope that it becomes a fashion item for their growing support base. If supporters buy shirts it makes it easier for me to sponsor the team."

So maybe my dream came true 15 years later than I wanted, but I think its a great trend that Soccer has started and we are capitalising on it at all levels. So if you are not sure what to buy for a birthday present, how about a national soccer league shirt? ●



& Girls

The introduction of the penalty tie breaker has had EVERYONE talking, it is the subject on which everybody involved in the game has an opinion - and one on which they are quite happy to offer.

In the press box it is almost a constant source of conversation with opinions being widely divided.

Coaches are almost universal in their condemnation of it; players aren't totally sure; and the game's officials are determined to see the innovation through.

SBS TV's Les Murray brings a new insight into the topic.

"Why should coaches like it," he says, "there isn't a coach in the world who can plan his strategy for a penalty shoot-out."

And with that sanguine comment the ever-sharp Mr Murray has hit the nail on the head.

The shoot-out has taken control of the game away from coaching influence to a degree that the men in the tracksuits can no longer control the result - or at least as much as what they would be happy with.

And what about the players?

Most NSL players seem to be uncommitted at this stage, although there is maybe more apprehension

There is no doubt; it is the most controversial move in Australian soccer since the move to summer time football in 1989.

DoorDie

The penalty shoot out.

from those who haven't been involved in a tie-breaker decider yet.

Goalkeepers are amongst the biggest opponents of the innovation with Sydney United's Zeljko Kalac being the most outspoken to date.

Risking a possible charge of bringing the game into disrepute Kalac has openly slammed the standard of refereeing under which the shoot outs are played.

"I'm not so much against the shoot out as an idea," he said after his side went down to Adelaide City.

"But what I am concerned about is the lack of consistency shown by referees."

Kalac received a yellow card in the City game for disputing the refer-

ee's order to re take a penalty after he had been adjudged to have moved from his line.

"There isn't a goalkeeper in the world who doesn't move when a penalty is being taken," he said in his defence, "and that is where the problem lies."

"How can one kick be ordered to be re-taken when the keepers have moved for the other nine as well."

Fair point, Zeljko.

And what makes his argument even stronger is the fact that he isn't actually complaining about the system - just its delivery.

"Why should I complain about the shoot-outs?" asks Australia's number two international keeper.

"After all, we aren't supposed to save ANY penalties.

"If I save anything at all then I have done well and if I save none then I have only done what is expected.

"So really, I can't lose."

But maybe the biggest reaction on the controversy has come from the fans.

Witness the scenes at Falcons Park, at Edensor Park and at Olympic Park when the shoot-outs have been in progress.

Even in pouring rain the fans have flocked to the behind-goal area to get a better spectacle.

And if anything, that is where the ASF moguls will be directing their interest.

In the early rounds of the NSL, the crowd figures show a healthy rise. That is all the justification that the bosses need to retain the shoot-out beyond its experimental tenure.

If that upsets coaches and some players then so be it, for the game badly needs to see the turnstiles clicking happily. ●

The penalty shoot-out

Steve Darby takes a look at the technical aspects associated with the ASF's highly successful penalty shoot-out tie breaker. The former English professional goalkeeper and much-travelled coach makes some interesting comments on the most topical subject in Australian soccer today.

Robby Baggio and Franco Baresi both succumbed to the pressures of the penalty shoot-out in the World Cup final, pressures which are now commonplace in the National Soccer League. It is interesting to see how some of our Coca-Cola Socceroo stars react to this pressure, and if the new tie-breaker rule had been introduced last season then we would have seen a shoot-out no fewer than 46 times!

The incentive of four points for a win has seen a more attacking philosophy emerge from the NSL clubs, but the reality of football is that the shoot-out will still take place with frequency. Therefore, penalty taking, and, of course, penalty saving, has become part of training at all NSL clubs, and coaches have had to study the techniques in both of these areas.

Coaches will tell you that practicing penalties is not easy. The reason being that while it is easy to groove in the technique of penalty kicks, it is almost impossible to re-create the 'pressure' of taking one in the match situation. Penalty shoot-outs at training invariably end up with players trying things that they won't repeat in a match.

It is also very easy for commentators to come out with clichés that no penalty should miss, but often the elite players like Baggio can, and do, go wrong. Very few of Australia's media have actually played football for a living, or even at a high level, and could not possibly understand the pressure involved.

However, in the simplest form the first job of a penalty taker is to put the

kick on target. The next two principles are the accuracy of the kick and its power. If the kick is put in certain areas then the keeper has no chance. Conversely, if the ball is hit with great power, then the keeper will again have no chance unless it is hit near him.

But, in reality, all of that technical theory goes out of the window and the psychological control of the player is the key issue. In fact, 'who has the bottle to take the kick'.

The best way to practice a penalty kick is for a player to practice on their own, without a goalkeeper in the goal. In this case if they can groove in a technique and hit the ball accurately enough, the stimulus of a goalkeeper is not needed. The key then in a match situation is to completely blank out the goalkeeper's presence and hit that same area of the goal.

A great theory!!!!

The Keepers

It's much easier to work on the technique of saving penalties than taking them. The major reason being that there is no psychological pressure on the keeper as they are in a no-lose situation, and can only emerge as the 'hero'.

We have to accept the rule that the keeper cannot move before a kick is taken, despite the sight we see in Italian Serie A matches where the keeper ends up on the six yard line as the kick is taken!

The first thing that the keeper must do is homework. Keepers and coaches are going to have to study

videos of shoot-outs to see if players are consistently putting the ball to one side. This may reduce the odds if they normally just gamble and dive the one way.

The second point is to learn which foot the kicker takes the kick with. This will give a clue to its direction. And the final point, or it could be called a visual clue, is the angle of the run up of the kicker.

These points will help a keeper attempt to decide which way a kick is being struck. In practical terms, if a kicker is a right footer and the run up is straight, then the odds are that the kick will go to the keeper's right hand side. The reason being is that this is the natural action of the kicker. For a kicker to change his mind in this scenario, and to put the ball to the keeper's left, he will have to give the keeper a visual clue. This being that they will lean their left shoulder back in order to open their stance. This body action that happens two strides before the ball is kicked may give the keeper a chance to dive to his left.

In summary, the key points for a keeper to look for are;

1. The foot with which the ball will be struck,
2. The angle of the the kicker's run up,
3. The body position of the kicker just before the ball is struck.

The reality is that the two step penalty kick, as taken by Fashanu and Signori, are virtually impossible to read and, of course, save. But how many players have the confidence to take a penalty kick in this way?

Jeff Olver, the ex Coca-Cola

Socceroo keeper who had a tremendous record of saving penalties in key matches and who has recently been involved in shoot outs in the Victorian League, reveals his methods;

"I used to establish the foot of the kicker, as at international level I had the opportunity to study videos before the game. I then tried to put the pressure on the kicker by taking as much time as I could to get ready and to make myself as big as possible. I then went off the run up of the player and took the big gamble."

Gary Meier, who holds the record as the longest serving NSL goalkeeper ever, has a different philosophy. He has this view;

"Being a keeper I tried to stand up and stay on my feet as long as possible. I literally took a gamble on my reflexes and waited 'till they hit the ball and I went for it. I wish I'd kept a record of my saving percentages - I'd like to see the success of my method."

This was also the method that Mark Schwarzer utilised in the World Cup shoot-out against Canada - with great success!

Another ex Coca-Cola Socceroo, Mike Gibson, went for the 'Red or Black' gambling theory. He went on his gut feeling at the moment and literally flew off in the direction he thought the ball was going. He reckoned that this method was more successful than his racing horse selection

By the end of the 1994/95 NSL I believe that the penalty shoot-out will have proved a huge success. Linked in with the points differential, an attacking philosophy should logically emerge. Also, a few keepers will emerge as 'heroes' due to great saves in the inevitable shoot-outs. It'll be great to see just who they are. Maybe then they can tell their method -or maybe they won't. ●



They are the nearly forgotten men of Australian soccer, the pioneers who blazed our way into the annals of World Cup history. Soccer Australia takes a trip down memory lane with ...

Rasic's Raiders

Though the years have passed by and some of those once young men are no longer slim of girth, the 1974 Socceroos deserve a special place in our hearts.

They were the first, the best of their era - they were the men who put soccer on the map in this country. No matter what anyone says - and yes, there are those who have knocked the abilities of yesterday's heroes - the '74 squad was a highly talented group of players, and with genuine star class players like Alston, Baartz, Richards and Buljevic in the team, they were a good all round team.

Rale Rasic, Australia's coach for its first ever appearance in the World Cup finals, selected a twenty-two man squad for the World Cup finals in Munich. His formula was based on a core from the back with a consistency of team selection that saw his side grow together.

Last year was an important anniversary in the history of Australian soccer - yet it passed largely ignored and forgotten except for a small group of former players and officials who were the pioneers of Australia's first ever, and to date only, entry into the World Cup finals.

From the brilliance of keeper Jack Reilly, Australia had a steel like quality in defence with its hard men Manfred Schaefer and Peter Wilson plus the brilliance of Adrian Alston and Ottie Abonyi up front.

Naturally there were weaknesses, although the big danger spot in the Australian team was in midfield where the Socceroos lacked a genuine playmaker of top international standing.

The full squad destined to represent Australia in the Munich finals, as

announced originally, was;

GOALKEEPERS

Jack Reilly : Age 30, Caps 12
Jimmy Milisavljevic : Age 23, Caps 0
Jim Fraser : Age 26, Caps 8

DEFENDERS

Col Curran: Age 26, Caps 12
Ivo Rudic : Caps 0
Manfred Schaefer : Age 31, Caps 47
Doug Utjesenovic : Age 25, Caps 20
John Watkiss : Caps 23
Peter Wilson, captain: Age 24, Caps 31

Harry Williams: Age 23, Caps 0

MIDFIELDERS

David Harding: Age 27, Caps 1
Jim MacKay : Caps 0
Ray Richards: Age 28, Caps 27
Jimmy Rooney: Age 28, Caps 18
John Warren: Age 31, Caps 42

FORWARDS

Adrian Alston: Age 26, Caps 30
Attila Abonyi : Age 27, Caps 36
Branko Buljevic: Age 26, Caps 17
Ernie Campbell: Age 23, Caps 8
Gary Manuel: Caps 2
Peter Ollerton: Age 23, Caps 2
Max Tolson: Caps 16

But with only days to go before the departure of the squad for its warm-up games en-route in Indonesia and Israel, goalie Jim Fraser withdrew from the squad.

The media quickly honed in on this sensation and gave it maximum play.

Fraser had opted out, ostensibly for business reasons, but the general feeling at the time was that he had taken exception to the news that Reilly, who had not played in any of the qualifiers, was to be the number one choice goalkeeper.

The St George player gained a lot of support in the media as his play had been a big factor in the Socceroos' qualification.

Fraser came into first team reckoning in the first round tournament and rarely put a foot wrong in all his games.

He might have expected an automatic selection because of this but a nightmare game against South Korea, when he gifted the opposition two goals, would have been enough to have Rasic patching up his differences with the brilliant former Hibernian keeper, Reilly.

23-year-old uncapped Allan Maher joined the party at the last moment and the Socceroos departed for Indonesia without any further controversy.

Rasic's Raiders had endured their fair share of flak during the process of qualification - largely fuelled by Rasic himself who was never backward in seeking out a willing journalist to get a point across in the press.

But the '74 Socceroos were now on their way to the finals after a typically nightmarish qualification route had thrown up several unexpected, and a few expected, hurdles.

The Qualification

Australia's path to Munich was relatively easy - at least by 1994 standards - but a minefield compared to that of the European and South American nations. The Oceanic Football Confederation was, and still is, a toothless collection of minnow countries and islands led by the might of Australia and New Zealand, and so the Aussies did it the hard way, accepting whatever hurdle pout in front of us.

Firstly, a four nation elimination group was held.

Mirroring the mistake that Australia had made in '65, Iraq and Indonesia chose to play in an Australian-based tournament, with only New Zealand maintaining its right to home ground advantage. >

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► The winner of that group was to advance to a home and away tie against Iran, and then, finally, an elimination against the winner of another Asian section which was to be South Korea, which had knocked out the tough Israelis, Australia's bogey team.

The first stage tournament gave Australia a whopping bonus, with five of its six games at home, and the solitary away game just across the Tasman in familiar, if definitely hostile, New Zealand.

Australia hadn't lost a game to its traditional sporting foes since 1954 so were understandably confident of going forward to the next stage, the home and away elimination against Iran - especially given the huge advantage of playing all of its other ties at home.

Coach Rale Rasic and his assistant, Les Scheinflug, selected a 22 man squad which included no fewer than seven players from the St George club, plus goalkeeper Jack Reilly and striker Adrian Alston, both former St George players.

Rasic had also spent a season as coach of St George in 1971 so was very familiar with the players who were to form the nucleus of his squad.

As a warm up the Socceroos played a three match home based series against Bulgaria, rated as the finest side to tour Australia up to that time.

Australia drew the first match in Sydney 2-2 but lost the other games 0-2 and 1-3.

The importance of the series was as a try out for the Aussie players and Rasic must have been more than pleased with that aspect.

Of the fifteen players used in those matches, fourteen became his 'first team' for the qualification games.

The exception was St George fullback Georgie Harris who was relegated to the second string after playing in the opening game against Bulgaria.

Harris's later omission was surprising as his speed down the flank, where he operated in an overlapping fullback's role, gave Australia an extra option in attack.

In that first game against Bulgaria he had very nearly got his name on the scorer's list.

Writing at the time in Soccer World (a great newspaper in its twenty years of publication) Lou Gautier wrote that Harris was one of Australia's best players, second only to big Peter Wilson.

Harris never played another game for Australia under Rasic but later was recalled to the national team.

Australia opened its campaign with a customary hard-fought 1-1 draw against New Zealand in Auckland.

Ernie Campbell, the flying Marconi winger, scored Australia's lifeline goal in the closing minutes after coming on as a second half substitute.

That goal was to prove vital as Australia struggled to win the group by a single point.

Good results against Iraq and Indonesia (3-1 and 2-1 respectively) were offset by a struggling 3-3 home draw against New Zealand.

This was a disaster to Australia's World Cup hopes and put an end to goalkeeper Ron Corry's 28 game international career.

The South Sydney Croatia (now Sydney United) keeper had been his country's number one since 1967 but his costly mistakes against the Kiwis, which resulted in at least two goals, caused Rasic to promote St George's safe, if unspectacular keeper, Jim Fraser.

Fraser produced the goods against Iraq in a game which saw Australia play for an -at-all-costs draw.

The 0-0 scoreline was seen as enough to take them through, with their last game

being against the hapless Indonesians.

Australia ripped Indonesia apart in its last game, winning 6-0 in a festive mood.

Led by the brilliant Ray Richards, Australia at last showed some of the form that they would need to win against Iran.

But Iraq pushed it to the final limit in the section after winning its closing game against New Zealand in equally scintillating style, 4-0.

Rasic had shown his strategy by using a core of the same players throughout the games. Cohesion was the cornerstone of his game plan, but some of the individual players came in for sustained press criticism in the aftermath.

None more so than goalkeeper Jack Reilly who had made himself unavailable because of his unwillingness to commit to the national team's training schedule, and was sacked as a consequence.

Rasic also strongly criticised both the NSWFF and the ASF for their perceived lack of support, even to the point of airing his intention in one Sydney newspaper of resigning after the World Cup campaign was over.

Rasic's prolonged attacks aimed at the administration, which were given ample space by grateful journalists, finally drew an official response - in the form of an official warning.

Rasic's squad for the elimination tournament was;

GOALKEEPERS

Corry, Reilly, Fraser.

Defenders; Nyskohous, Harris, Williams, Utjesenovic, Hogg, Wilson, Schaefer.

MIDFIELDERS

MacKay, Richards, Baartz, Warren, McDonald, Rooney.

FORWARDS

Alston, Butler, Abonyi, Campbell, Tolson, Buljevic.

Iran

In hindsight, Australia had the perfect set-up for the matches against Iran.

Firstly, the games were being played in August, right in the business part of the domestic season when the players were at their very peak.

Secondly, and just as importantly, FIFA came to our rescue with a piece of bureaucratic bungling of the highest proportions.

Iran had succeeded in winning the ballot to play the first game away from home only to be shocked by FIFA's decision that the return leg must be played in Teheran just six days later.

That curious FIFA directive meant that Iran had to fly 10,000 miles to Sydney for the first leg, and then, just eight days later, and with an important 90 minutes of football in between, repeat the trip back to Iran to prepare for the second leg.

20,000 miles in eight days! Only FIFA could bungle like that

Rasic's 22 man squad didn't contain any major surprises, with the only real omissions being Bobby Hogg (who had broken his leg in a club match) and keeper Jackie Reilly.

As expected, Ron Corry's name was missing from the list and the long standing Aussie number one's career was now officially over.

The squad was;

GOALKEEPERS

Fraser, Milisavljevic.

Defenders; Utjesenovic, Williams, Wilson, Warkiss, Harris, Curran.

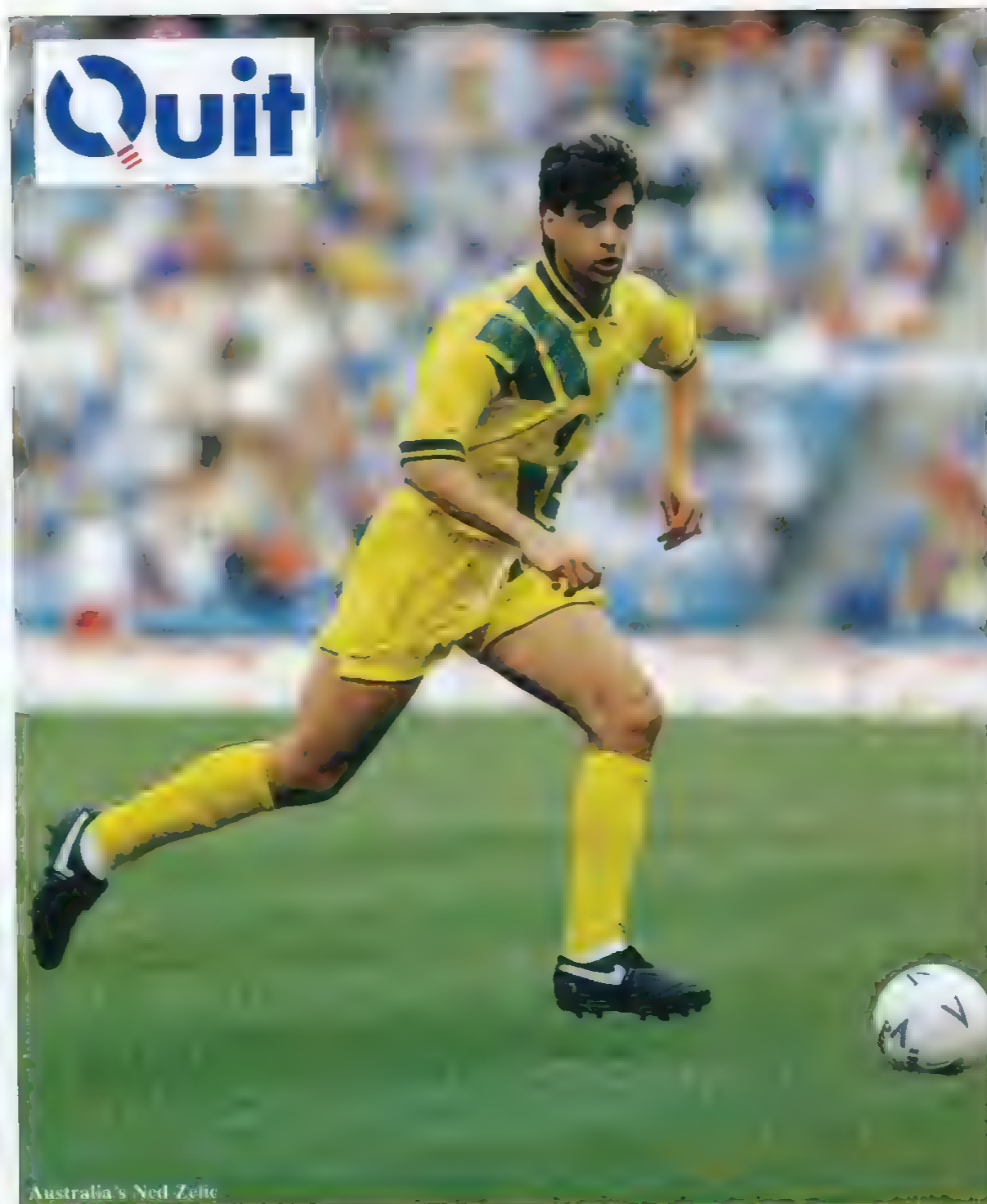
MIDFIELDERS

Baartz, MacKay, Richards, Rooney, Warren, McDonald.

FORWARDS

Abonyi, Alagich, Alston, Tolson, Buljevic, Vojtek, Ollerton, Campbell.

continued on page 20 ►



Another Non-Smoking Hero.



SMOKING
WHO NEEDS IT?



► continued from page 19

Iran, with a population of some 31 million, was as fiercely fanatical about its football as many of the more illustrious names in world football.

If some of the experts in Sydney were expecting an easy path to the next stage, then the Iranians, coached by Scot Danny McLellan, didn't quite see it that way.

The only previous game between Australia and Iran had been in 1970 when the two countries had met in Teheran. Australia had won that game 2-1, but a lot had happened since then - including Iran's attempt to rub the game out of the official records.

In Iranian records the match is recorded as Australia v Persepolis, one of Iran's leading clubs, while the ASF list it as a full international.

But Australia was at last beginning to grow up as a soccer nation, and instead of relying on imports it was fielding Aussie born players.

Of Rasic's 22 man squad ten of the players were actually born in the country while three others had been in Australia since early childhood.

And on an August Sunday afternoon at the old Sydney Sportsground the Socceroos moved one step closer to the World Cup finals in Munich.

They didn't just beat Iran, they destroyed them.

In front of a fiercely loyal 31,000 crowd the Socceroos blitzed their opponents who in the end were considered lucky to escape with just a three goal pasting.

With a huge amount of pressure Australia finally went ahead just three minutes before half time when Adrian Alston crashed home one of his most famous headers after Johnny Warren had head-flicked on a Dougie Utjesenovic free kick.

And within seconds of the second half kick off Otte Abonyi put his country two up after Ray Baartz had raced through a stunned Iranian defence.

Seven minutes before full time, another Utjesenovic free kick found its mark, this time the big blond head of Captain Socceroo, Peter Wilson, who knocked the ball into the back of the net with ease.

3-0! What a score.

Lou Gautier headlined one of those pieces of copy we all later regret when Soccer World screamed,

Teheran Match Should be a formality

It seemed that all of Australia expected the Iranians to be easy-beats in Teheran. No-one would concede that the Iranians would even score.

But all soccer lovers in Australia were to be put through 90 minutes of sheer hell, courtesy of Martin Royal's ABC TV live early morning broadcast, before the Socceroos advanced to meet South Korea.

A 14th minute penalty brought the 80,000 fanatical Teheran crowd to its feet as Australia were stunned in 30 degree heat.

And when Ghelichkhani put Iran 2-0 ahead after just 31 minutes the Socceroos were clearly on the ropes.

Against all odds, Jim Fraser kept his sheet clean in the second half and Australia scraped through into the next stage of the World Cup thanks to the barest of one goal aggregate margins.

When the final whistle blew the Socceroos were pelted with scores of small objects from the crowd.

Ray Richards had already been struck with a coin as he prepared to toss one of his famous long throw-ins.

But despite a dramatic loss of form, in which an over-confident arrogance was mostly to blame, the Socceroos advanced to the final elimination, against South Korea, southern cousins of the same country that had so thoroughly demolished Australian

dreams in 1965.

Rasic relied on almost the exact same squad for the matches against South Korea, the sole exception being the addition of reserve keeper, Alan Maher, for forward Peter Ollerton.

This time, however, the expected onslaught didn't materialise.

It was just one of those games in which Australia were rubbish.

It happens from time to time, this was one of them, but sadly it was an important first leg of the final World Cup hurdle.

The Sydney Sportsground was packed to the rafters with a 32,000 plus crowd hanging onto fences and jamming every spare inch of space.

The old stadium was never built for comfort and was forty years out of date even in 1973, but those fans would have sacrificed all of their comforts for just one goal.

Australia's best performers were typically in defence where goalie Jim Fraser had a blinder.

The Sydney Sportsground was packed to the rafters with a 32,000 plus crowd hanging onto fences and jamming every spare inch of space.

The forward line, so often the saviour, was disappointing with neither Tolson, Alston nor Abonyi having much of a match.

Neither did Baartz, who also played as a striker, rather than in his best position of midfielder.

Rasic made three changes for the return match, bringing back Schaefer and Rooney in place of Watkiss and Warren, and dropping his tall striker Adrian Alston for Victorian Branko Buljevic.

Playing with a more defensive look than previous games, Rasic's plans soon backfired as South Korea shot into an early 14th minute lead, following a mix up between Utjesenovic and Fraser.

Utjesenovic's pass back never reached the keeper and when Fraser did get hold of the ball he fumbled it long enough to let Kim Jae Han slip in to score an easy goal.

Fourteen minutes later the same player knocked down a header into the path of Koh Jae Wook whose shot screamed into the net.

Two-nil down, it looked as if it was bye-bye Munich.

But within sixty seconds Australia clawed its way back from the grave when Buljevic justified his selection by heading a Col Curran cross into the net.

The equaliser came just into the second half when one of Richard's long throws bounced through a cluttered penalty box to Baartz who made no mistake.

The Socceroos held on until the final whistle to force a play-off, with away goals not counting for anything in the '74 World Cup.

Once again Rasic stuck by his by-word of consistency and named the same starting line up.

But in the neutral Crown Colony of Hong Kong the Aussies played a different game and could have been three up before Jimmy MacKay's second half screamer put them on the way to their first, and only, World Cup finals.

Alston came on as a 56th minute sub for his former club mate, Otte Abonyi, and his height and skill in the air added the final ingredient to the Rasic recipe.

It was Noddy's 'attention' in the air that caused Park Young Tae to fluff his header - straight to the feet of Ray Richards.

Richards, one of the best passers of a ball ever seen in Australia, knocked the ball across field for an oncoming Jim MacKay.

MacKay's 30 yard scorcher burned the air as it bulletted into the Korean goal.

That was it.

Good night Korea, time to party and MUNICH HERE WE COME!

Rale Rasic, the controversial Socceroo coach, had done what no-one had before and no-one since.

He had also answered his critics where it counts most.

It also capped off a fine personal year for the chatty ex Yugoslavian junior international who rarely ever went by his Christian name of Zvonimir, for Rale Rasic had also coached Marconi to the NSW Championship.

Munich

In their three games in the finals the Australian team showed a remarkable continuity with only thirteen players sharing the starting honours.

Ten players played in all three games while three players (Warren, Abonyi and Williams) shared the other starting spot.

Co-incidentally, all three players were

Realistically, Australia didn't have a chance from the very outset.

But the game was probably more of a personal challenge for the players who realised that they had little or no chance of knocking off the team that was to go on to become 1974 World Champions.

For Alston that challenge was to score.

For Schaefer, himself born in Germany, it was to stop Gerd Muller, Der Bomber, from scoring.

Neither succeeded, but Rasic achieved his own ambition of not seeing his team slaughtered by the free-running Germans.

Rasic made only one change bringing in Apia's livewire forward Ernie Campbell for Johnny Warren.

But with Beckenbauer strolling through the ninety minutes in almost total control his precision passes were enough to keep Australia almost on a permanent back foot.

Overath opened the scoring on 12 minutes with a blockbuster in the penalty

area which left Reilly helpless, Cullman headed the second after 35 minutes and then the lethal Muller put away the third with a header from a Hoeness corner after 53 minutes.

West Germany could have had another three but for big Peter Wilson, the blond haired miner from the coalfields of Northern New South Wales, who stopped two shots on the line, and the bar, which came to the rescue of a Muller thunderbolt.

At the end of the game the Australian and German players swapped shirts in the traditional manner with the majority wanting to claim the prize of the Kaiser's shirt.

But Beckenbauer and Alston had already made an arrangement during the warm-up to swap shirts and Noddy got one over his team-mates.

Alston's abiding memory of the World Cup isn't getting Beckenbauer's shirt but afterwards in the German dressing room when one of the world's highest paid and most graceful players boasted to his own team-mates: "I've got it, I've got Noddy's shirt!"

Australia: Reilly, Richards, Curran, Rooney, Utjesenovic, Schaefer, Wilson, MacKay, Campbell, Buljevic (Abonyi), Alston.

Chile 0 Australia 0

Again Rasic stuck by his selection making only one change in bringing in St George's Aboriginal star Harry Williams for a taste of the big time.

The game, played in bucketing rain, was not a soccer classic by any stretch of the imagination.

Instead it was a hard fought contest with both sides content to give stick.


Neither country had any chance of qualifying for the next stage so the game was played for pure pride.

Curran became the victim of the game when, after a heavy tackle, he was stretchered off to be replaced by Peter Ollerton.

Both Chile and Australia had enough chances to win the game but in the end they both squandered them and finished the game in a scoreless draw - with only one solitary goal scored between the two sides in the whole tournament.

Rather surprisingly West Germany suffered a 0-1 defeat in its final game with East Germany although both qualified for the next round.

Australia: Reilly, Richards (Ollerton), Curran, Williams, MacKay, Schaefer, Wilson, Rooney, Utjesenovic, Buljevic, Alston. ■



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- ① Mark Viduka, Melbourne Knights - Unstoppable. Top goal scorer of the NSL up to Rd 12 with 10 goals.
 - ② Ransford Banini, Melbourne S.C. The Lone Ranger.
 - ③ Tony Vidmar, Adelaide City...hot from the beggining of the national Soccer League 1995 Season.
 - ④ Jason Polak, South Melbourne. Once again, in control of the game.
 - ⑤ Eugene Brazzale, newly appointed FIFA referee.
 - ⑥ Frank Juric, Melbourne Knights... hot property!
-
-





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.....
Andrea Icardi, Marconi ⑦
coach. High expectations -
but a little to show.

Ross Aloisi, maybe going back to ⑧
his home town will make him
return to the expected form.

Paul Wade, South Melbourne. ⑨
Forced to face uncertainty, but for
how long?

Mehmet Durakovic, South ⑩
Melbourne - Injury bound - cer-
tainly could do with a little luck
on his side.

Michael Urukalo, Heidelberg ⑪
coach...sorry, services are
no longer required!



Philip Micallef of the Daily Telegraph-Mirror is the author of "The World Cup, an Australian viewpoint", a recognised authority on European football and a regular columnist on the world game in Sydney's leading tabloid. This month he previews the climax to the European Champions' Cup, the greatest club competition in the world.

The prospect of Italy's AC Milan losing their grip on the Champions' Cup has set European football abuzz. As the holders struggle to recapture the form that gave them their fifth title last May, a number of ambitious clubs are keen to take the opportunity of landing the biggest prize in world club football. As the once merciless bear battles to stay alive after suffering multiple wounds, hungry vultures are waiting for the right moment to swoop for the kill.

Former winners Barcelona, Bayern Munich, Ajax Amsterdam and Benfica are all expected to mount a serious challenge for the cup when the quarter-finals resume in March. And 'new boys' Gothenburg and Paris St Germain played well enough in the round-robin stage of the tournament to suggest that they have the potential to go all the way and record their first victory. It's a shame that such big and ambitious clubs as Manchester United, Anderlecht and Glasgow Rangers won't participate in the final dogfight for the honours.

The three clubs that have dominated their respective league championships in the last few years have discovered to their cost that European club football at its highest level is just a bit beyond their means. Milan, of course, are not prepared to give up their title without a fight. Far from it, not with the success of their vast commercial interests depending on the club staying in the European Cup circle. Although the Italian team is clearly in decline and a few elder statesmen in the side are well past their peak, Milan still have a first-team pool that is the envy of most other clubs.

And although they were disappointing in the Toyota Cup clash in

Argentinian striker Claudio Caniggia have proved bargain buys. Along with local hero Joao Pinto they were largely responsible for the Lisbon club finishing on top of a round-robin featuring Hadrjuk Split, Anderlecht and Steau Bucharest. Benfica and Milan, who have met in two European Cup finals, should provide a lively clash that is expected to go down to the wire.

The match of the round is that between Barcelona and PSG. On their day 'Barca' can be Europe's most entertaining and devastating side but, much to coach Johann Cruyff's frustration, their defence leaves a lot to be desired. For all his genial passes and fierce shots, Dutchman Ronnie Koeman is woefully slow on the turn and young goalkeeper Carlos Busquets is still very inexperienced and cannot instill the sort of confidence in his defence as his predecessor Andoni Zubizarreta did.

The Saints, after sacking defence-minded coach Artur Jorge and replacing him with former French swashbuckling international Luis Fernandez, finished the year superbly. The French champions, who have in David Ginola one of the best wingers in the world and in George Weah a deadly finisher, are the only team to have won all their matches in the competition so far and would not be overawed by the slick Spaniards, especially since they play the return at the Parc des Princes.

Their confrontation also offers a fascinating duel at a distance between the two famous Brazilians. One of them, striker Romario, gave his country the World Cup with a series of stupendous goals in the USA and was named player of the tournament. The other, schemer

fragmentation of the old Yugoslavia and this was clearly shown in the European Championship qualifiers when the Red and Whites gave World Cup runners-up Italy a football lesson in Palermo, winning 2-1.

The last quarter-final pits Bayern with Gothenburg. The Swedes surprised many people by winning their group ahead of Barcelona and Manchester United. But in Jesper Blomqvist, 20, they have a striker with the potential of becoming a genuine world class player. It was he who virtually destroyed United in the second leg in Sweden with his polished play on the wing. Bayern were on the way out of the tournament after a dismal campaign when the Germans came up with a magnificent effort to beat Dynamo Kiev in the Ukraine to clinch second spot behind PSG.

French import Jean-Pierre Papin finally found his scoring touch to give Italian coach Giovanni Trapattoni and his Bavarian club a big sigh of relief ... and a \$2.6m cheque from UEFA for reaching the quarter-finals of the series. Swedish and German football are both in recess at the moment. It would be interesting to see whether Gothenburg maintain their early-season form and promise or whether the winter break gives Bayern time to get their house in order. In any case, the Bavarians' big-match experience should be decisive.

The Cup Winners' Cup draw has provided a couple of interesting ties. Feyenoord of Holland take on Real Zaragoza of Spain in the match of the round. Hispano-German clashes are nearly always explosive affairs and this one should be no exception. Zaragoza are also well served in midfield by Uruguayan Gustavo Poyet and former Tottenham man Nayim. Feyenoord did particularly well to eliminate Werder Bremen in the last round, beating the Germans 4-3 away after winning only 1-0 in Rotterdam. Two of the main destroyers that night were strikers Henrik Larsson and Gaston Taument. These two internationalists with tremendous pace will have to be marked tightly if Real are to reach their first Euro semi-final since 1987, when they ran into Marco van Basten's Ajax Amsterdam in the Cup Winners' Cup.

Sampdoria's confrontation with Porto could produce plenty of quality football that the two teams are famous for. Slick striker Roberto Mancini on his day can be a great player to watch and the Portuguese would do well to keep a close watch on him.

Holders Arsenal, not the most entertaining side of the Premier League, seem to reserve their best form for European football. They would probably need it against French side Auxerre, who are no world-beaters but are very strong at home.

Chelsea, who as beaten FA Cup finalists qualified for the competition because Manchester United won the double, are making the most of their good fortune. The boys from Stamford Bridge, after surviving a torrid time in Vienna against Austria in the last round, would be fairly confident of beating Bruges of Belgium. If Chelsea and

Arsenal reach the semi-finals and are separated in the draw, they could well meet in the first final in the history of European club soccer between two teams from the same city.

The UEFA Cup could well be called the 'Italo-German' Cup this year. No fewer than six teams from these two powerful footballing countries have reached the quarter-finals. The two 'intruders' are Nantes of France and Odense of Denmark, who caused a major sensation in the last round by knocking out Spanish giants Real Madrid. The French side will meet tough cookies Bayer Leverkusen while the Danes take on stylish Parma. Revitalised Juventus, who could well wrest the Italian title from Milan this year, are favoured to beat inconsistent Eintracht Frankfurt but star-studded Borussia Dortmund should be too experienced for Lazio, who will be playing in the first continental quarter-final in their club's history. ●

The Euro Quarter-Final pairings;

Champions' Cup

Bayern Munich (Germany) v Gothenburg (Sweden)

Barcelona (Spain) v Paris St Germain (France)

AC Milan (Italy) v Benfica (Portugal)

Hadrjuk Split (Croatia) v Ajax Amsterdam (Holland)

Matches to be played 1 March and 15 March

Cup Winners' Cup

Feyenoord (Holland) v Real Zaragoza (Spain)

Sampdoria (Italy) v Porto (Portugal)

Arsenal (England) v Auxerre (France)

Bruges (Belgium) v Chelsea (England)

Matches to be played 2 March and 16 March

UEFA Cup

Eintracht Frankfurt (Germany) v Juventus (Italy)

Lazio (Italy) v Borussia Dortmund (Germany)

Parma (Italy) v Odense (Denmark)

Bayer Leverkusen (Germany) v Nantes (France)

Matches to be played 28 February and 14 March

The UEFA Cup could well be called the 'Italo-German' Cup this year. No fewer than six teams from these two powerful footballing countries have reached the quarter-finals.

Tokyo against modest Velez Sarsfield in December, they showed in patches on the night that the old style was still alive. Well orchestrated moves that under normal circumstances would have led to great goals were being spoiled by a pass too short, a shot too hurried or a header just wide.

Fullback Christian Panucci was telling me on the eve of the game with the Argentinians that a major problem with Milan this season was that the players were "too slow" and their "will to win is not always as strong as it should be." He did admit, however, that fans were expecting too much from the side after that marvellous 4-0 win over Barcelona in May's European Cup final. "We played perfect football that night and it's very hard to reach that level again," he said.

Milan now play Benfica in the quarter-finals in March. Cash-stricken Benfica were forced to sell off some of their stars in the off-season in order to make ends meet but made two important acquisitions. Belgian goalkeeper Michel Preud'homme, arguably the best Number One in the world, and

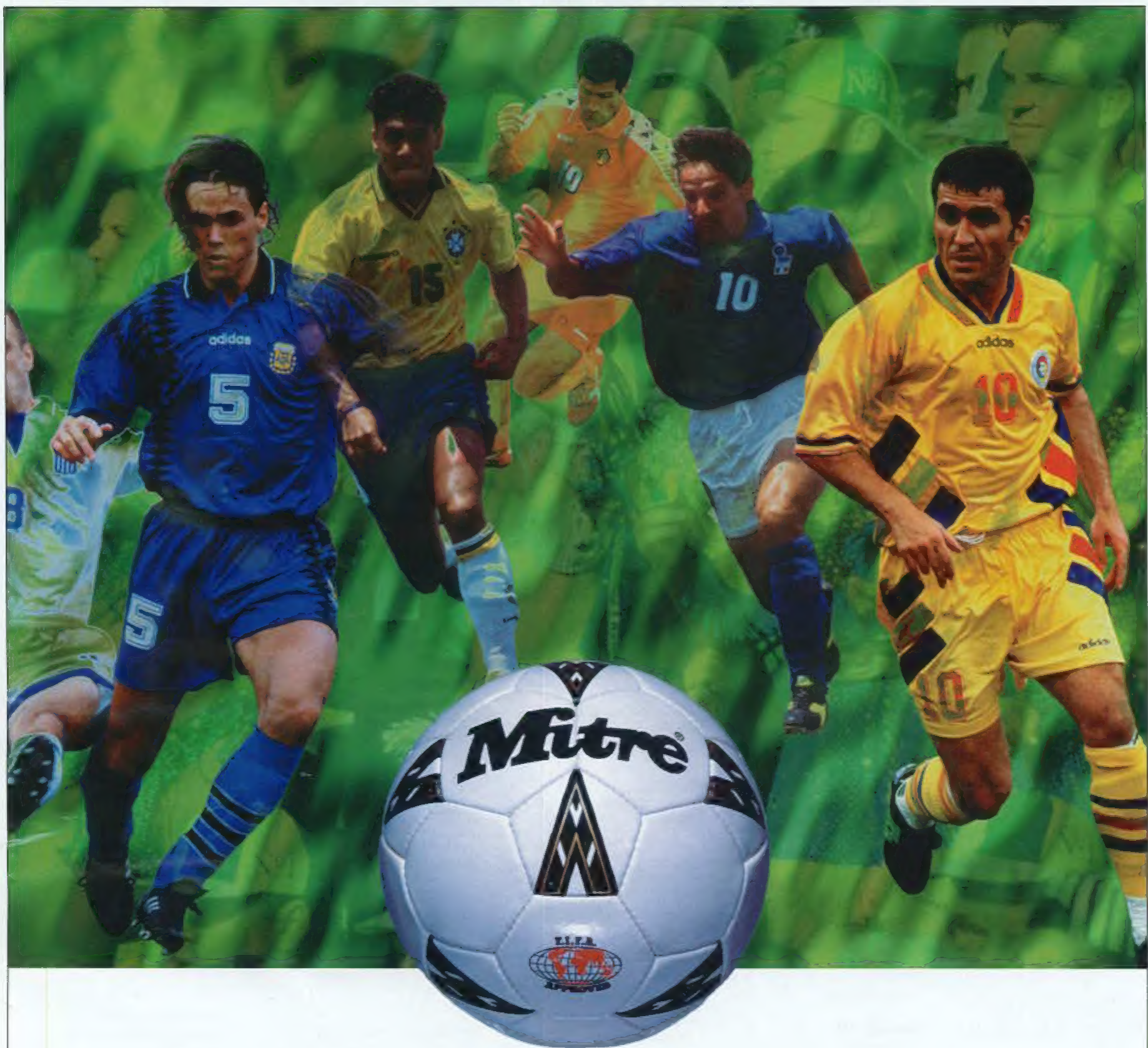
Rai, started the World Cup as skipper but old hero Socrates' younger brother lost the captaincy and even his place in the side as Carlos Alberto Parreira opted for less flair and more commitment in midfield.

Ajax Amsterdam are being freely touted as the next kings of Europe after beating Milan comprehensively at home and away in the round-robin. Ajax, who have three under 18 players in the side, play the game with such creativity and a seemingly happy-go-lucky attitude that they are already being compared with the old Ajax side that dominated Europe in the early 70s.

Of course these comparisons are premature but the fact remains that such naturally gifted players as Marc Overmars, Jari Litmanen and young Patrick Kluivert - not to mention old war-horse Frank Rijkaard - could give Dutch football its first European Cup since 1988 when PSV Eindhoven beat Benfica. The Amsterdammers are not expected to fall to Hadrjuk Split but the Croatians cannot be underestimated.

Croatian football seems to have received a new lease of life since the

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Round 7

Brisbane Strikers 3 (T Cranney, R Brown 2) Melbourne SC 0
Venue: Perry Park
Attendance: 1,176
Referee: C Diomis

Marconi-Fairfield 2 (Talay, Harper) Morwell Falcons 1 (Bothwell)
Venue: Marconi Stadium
Attendance: 3,776
Referee: B Hugo

Wollongong City 1 (O'Shea) Sydney United 1 (Zdrilic)
Sydney United won 3-1 on penalties
Venue: Brandon Park
Attendance: 3,692
Referee: R Lorenc

Melbourne Knights 2 (Lapsansky, Viduka) Heidelberg United 1 (Gnjidic)
Venue: Croatian Sports Centre
Attendance: 5,241
Referee: J Fraser

South Melbourne 1 (Awaritefe) Adelaide City 2 (C Foster, Mori)
Venue: Olympic Park
Attendance: 3,494
Referee: G Connolly

West Adelaide 0 Parramatta Eagles 1 (Gilbert)
Venue: Hindmarsh Stadium
Attendance: 3,096
Referee: M Ingham

Round 8

Sydney United 0 West Adelaide 1 (Iriarte)
Venue: Croatian Sports Centre
Attendance: 1,323
Referee: S Micaleff

Melbourne SC 1 (Zinni) Wollongong City 3 (Coveny 2, Murray)
Venue: Olympic Park
Attendance: 1,182
Referee: J Papanicolas

Morwell Falcons 1 (Bothwell) Melbourne Knights 1 (Silic)
Melbourne Knights won 7-6 on penalties
Venue: Morwell Stadium
Attendance: 3,339
Referee: E Brazzale

Parramatta Eagles 2 (Mendez, Gilbert) South Melbourne 0
Venue: Melita Stadium
Attendance: 4,069
Referee: C Diomis

Heidelberg United 0 Brisbane Strikers 2 (Evans, Slater)
Venue: Olympic Village
Attendance: 850
Referee: G Connolly

Adelaide City 3 (Mori, Mullen, Gibson) Sydney Olympic 1 (Tome)
Venue: Hindmarsh Stadium
Attendance: 3,169
Referee: J Fraser

Round 9

South Melbourne 1 (Trimboli) Sydney Olympic 1 (Bacak)
South Melbourne won 5-3 on penalties
Venue: Olympic Park
Attendance: 3,000
Referee: J Rutter

National Soccer League Ladder								
End Round Thirteen	P	W	D	PW	L	F	A	Points
Melbourne Knights	12	9	1	1	2	27	12	38
Adelaide City	12	8	3	1	1	22	9	36
Sydney United	12	6	4	3	2	16	8	31
West Adelaide	12	6	2	2	4	14	13	28
Brisbane Strikers	12	5	4	2	3	15	8	26
Parramatta Eagles	12	5	2	1	5	13	13	23
Sydney Olympic	12	4	4	1	4	12	15	21
Wollongong City	12	4	3	1	5	18	19	20
Morwell Falcons	12	2	8	3	2	15	16	19
South Melbourne	12	3	2	1	7	22	22	15
Marconi-Fairfield	12	2	3	2	7	13	20	13
Melbourne SC	12	2	3	2	7	10	25	13
Heidelberg United	12	2	1	0	9	8	25	9

Note: 4 points for a win in regulation time, 1 point for a draw and a bonus point for a penalty shoot out win.

West Adelaide 2 (Ndongo-Keller, Iriarte) Melbourne SC 1 (Lazarevski)

Venue: Hindmarsh Stadium
Attendance: 3,000
Referee: E Lennie
Marconi-Fairfield 1 (Harper) Adelaide City 2 (C Foster, Mori)
Venue: Marconi Stadium
Attendance: 4,383
Referee: E Brazzale

Parramatta Eagles 0 Sydney United 1 (Bilokapic)
Venue: Melita Stadium
Attendance: 4,764
Referee: J Fraser

Wollongong City 1 (Cervinski) Heidelberg United 2 (Vlahos 2)
Venue: Brandon Park
Attendance: 3,120
Referee: R Davies

Brisbane Strikers 1 (Hunter) Morwell Falcons 1 (Markovski)
Morwell Falcons won 4-2 on penalties
Venue: Perry Park
Attendance: 2,793
Referee: R Lorenc

Round 10

Melbourne SC 0 Parramatta Eagles 0
Melbourne SC won 5-3 on penalties
Venue: Olympic Park
Attendance: 1,245
Referee: C Naumcevski

Sydney United 2 (Rudan, Hristodoulou) South Melbourne 1 (Trimboli)
Venue: Croatian Sports Centre
Attendance: 3,2500
Referee: B Hugo

Morwell Falcons 1 (Bothwell) Wollongong City 1 (Dimoski)
Venue: Morwell Stadium
Attendance: 3,450
Referee: G Connolly

Adelaide City 3 (Mullen, Mori, C Foster) Melbourne Knights 0
Venue: Hindmarsh Stadium
Attendance: 9,300
Referee: R Lorenc

Sydney Olympic 2 (Bacak 2) Marconi-Fairfield 1 (Bingley)
Venue: Leichhardt Oval
Attendance: 5,850
Referee: M Ingham

Heidelberg United 0 West Adelaide 3 (R Alagich, Cardozo, Slikaas)
Venue: Olympic Village
Attendance: 2,000
Referee: J Markovski

Round 11

Melbourne Knights 1 (Silic) Sydney Olympic 2 (Maloney 2)
Venue: Croatian Sports Centre
Attendance: 3,500
Referee: G Connolly

Sydney United 2 (Zdrilic, Z Babic) Melbourne SC 0
Venue: Croatian Sports Centre
Attendance: 1,200
Referee: C Diomis

Parramatta Eagles 1 (G Gunning) Heidelberg United 2 (Gnjidic 2)
Venue: Melita Stadium
Attendance: 1,474
Referee: R Lorenc

South Melbourne 2 (Kelic, Boutsianis) Marconi-Fairfield 0
Venue: Olympic Park
Attendance: 4,340
Referee: J Fraser

Brisbane Strikers 1 (Slater) Adelaide City 1 (Mori)
Venue: Perry Park
Attendance: 3,816
Referee: D Crawford

West Adelaide 2 (Hooker, Andrioli) Morwell Falcons (Armstrong, Tapai, own goal)
Venue: Hindmarsh Stadium
Attendance: 2,800
Referee: B Panella

Round 12

Melbourne SC 0 South Melbourne 6 (Boutsianis 2, Polak, Kelic, Trimboli, own goal)
Venue: Olympic Park
Attendance: 6,572 (Double Header)
Referee: J Rutter

Heidelberg United 0 Sydney United 3 (Lamond 2, Z Babic)
Venue: Olympic Park
Attendance: 6,572 (Double Header)
Referee: G Connolly

Morwell Falcons 0 Parramatta Eagles 2 (G Gunning 2)
Venue: Morwell Stadium
Attendance: 2,857
Referee: R Davies

Marconi-Fairfield 2 Melbourne Knights 3 (Biskic, Viduka 2)
Venue: Marconi Stadium
Attendance: 4,807
Referee: E Lennie

Sydney Olympic 0 Brisbane Strikers 0
Brisbane Strikers won 3-0 on penalties
Venue: Leichhardt Oval
Attendance: 4,066
Referee: E Brazzale

Adelaide City 3 (Gibson, Mori 2) Wollongong City 1 (Coveny)
Venue: Hindmarsh Stadium
Attendance: 3,708
Referee: B Panella

Round 13

Melbourne Knights 3 (De Amicis, Tiatto, Viduka) South Melbourne 0
Venue: Croatian Sports Centre
Attendance: 7,448
Referee: E Brazzale
Match played 23 December 1994

Melbourne SC 3 (Trajkovski, Zinni, Enes) Heidelberg United 0
Venue: Olympic Park
Attendance: 2,250
Referee: J Markovski

Wollongong City 4 (Coveny 2, Horsley, Ackers) Sydney Olympic 1 (Augerinos)
Venue: Brandon Park
Attendance: 4,200
Referee: S Micaleff

Brisbane Strikers 2 (Slater, Hunter) Marconi-Fairfield 1 (De Marigny)
Venue: Perry Park
Attendance: 3,487
Referee: D Crawford

Sydney United 1 (Rudan) Morwell Falcons 1 (Bothwell)
Venue: Croatian Sports Centre
Attendance: 3,480
Referee: J Papanicolas

West Adelaide 2 (Hooker, Cardozo) Adelaide City 1 (Mullen)
Venue: Hindmarsh Stadium
Attendance: 9,309
Referee: E Lennie ●



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BackRow: Brian Bannan (Trainer), Damian Mori, Joe Mullen, Jamie Perin, Craig Foster, Michael Brockwell. **MiddleRow:** John Perin (Assistant Coach), Carlo Talladira, Milan Ivanovic, Jason Petkovic, Tony Vidmar, Alex Tobin, Joel Marino, John Nyskonus (Assistant Coach). **FrontRow:** Brad Hassell, Mark Yates, Zoran Matic, Goran Lozanovski, Jamie Carreno, Joe Camilleri (Trainer).

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